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Working Class Against
Fascism Response**

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SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS OF
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**The Working Class
Against Fascism**

SPEECH IN REPLY TO THE
DISCUSSION

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The Working Class Against Fascism

Comrade Dimitrov's Speech in Reply to the Discussion.

Comrades! The very full discussion on my report shows the immense interest taken by the Congress in the fundamental tactical problems and tasks of the struggle of the working class against the offensive of capital and fascism, against the threat of imperialist war.

Summing up the eight-day discussion we can state that all the principal propositions contained in the report have met with the unanimous approval of the Congress. None of the speakers objected to the tactical line we have proposed or to the resolution which has been submitted.

I venture to say that at none of the previous Congresses of the Communist International has such ideological and political solidarity been revealed as at the present Congress. (*Applause.*) The complete unanimity displayed at the Congress indicates that the necessity of revising our policy and tactics in accordance with the changed conditions and with due regard for the most abundant and instructive experience of the past few years, has come to be fully recognised in our ranks.

This unanimity may undoubtedly be regarded as one of the most important prerequisites for success in solving the paramount immediate problem of the international proletarian movement, namely, *establishing unity of action of all sections of the working class in the struggle against fascism.*

The successful solution of this problem requires, first, that Communists skilfully wield the weapon of *Marxist-Leninist analysis*, while carefully studying the specific conditions and the alignment of class forces as they develop, and plan their activity and struggle accordingly. We must mercilessly root out the weakness, not infrequently observed in our comrades, for cut-and-dried schemes, lifeless formulas and ready-made patterns. We must put an end to the state of affairs in which Communists, when lacking the knowledge or ability for Marxist-Leninist analysis, substitute general phrases and slogans such as "the revolutionary way out of the crisis," without making the slightest serious attempt to explain the conditions, the relationship of class forces, the degree of revolutionary maturity of the proletariat and the toiling masses, and the level of influence of the Communist Party necessary to render such a revolutionary way out of the crisis possible. Without such an analysis all these catch-

words become "dud" shells, empty phrases which only obscure our tasks of the day. Without a concrete Marxist-Leninist analysis we shall never be able correctly to present and solve the problem of fascism, the problem of the proletarian front and the general people's front, the problem of our attitude towards bourgeois-democracy, the problem of the processes going on within the working class, particularly among the Social-Democratic workers, the problem of a united front government, or any of the numerous other new and complex problems with which life itself and the development of the class struggle confronts us now and will confront us in the future.

Second, we need *live people*—people who have grown up from the masses of the workers, have sprung from their everyday struggle, people of militant action wholeheartedly devoted to the cause of the proletariat, people whose brains and hands will give effect to the decisions of our Congress. Without Bolshevik, Leninist-Stalinist cadres we shall be unable to solve the enormous problems that confront the toilers in the fight against fascism.

Third, we need people equipped with the *compass of Marxist-Leninist theory*, for people who are unable to make skilful use of this instrument slip into narrow, make-shift politics, take decisions only from case to case, and lose the broad perspective of the struggle which shows the masses where we are going and whither we are leading the toilers.

Fourth, we need the *organisation of the masses* in order to put our decisions into practice. Our ideological and political influence alone is not enough. We must put a stop to reliance on *spontaneity in the movement* (on the hope that the movement would develop of its own accord), which is one of our fundamental weaknesses. We must remember that without persistent, prolonged, patient, and sometimes apparently thankless organisational work on our part, the masses will never make for the Communist shore. In order to be able to organise the masses we must acquire Lenin's and Stalin's art of making our decisions the property not only of the Communists but also of the broadest masses of the toilers. We must learn to talk to the masses, not in the language of book formulas, but in the language of fighters in the cause of the masses, whose every word, whose every idea reflects the innermost thoughts and sentiments of millions.

It is with these problems that I should like to deal in my closing speech.

Comrades! The Congress has welcomed the new tactical lines with great enthusiasm and unanimity. Enthusiasm and unanimity

are all very well, of course; but it is still better when these are combined with a well-considered and critical approach to the tasks that confront us, with a proper comprehension of the decisions adopted and a real understanding of the means and methods by which these decisions are to be applied to the particular circumstances of each country.

After all, we have before now unanimously adopted good resolutions, but the trouble was that not infrequently after adopting these decisions, we at best made them the property of only the small vanguard of the working class. These decisions did not become flesh and blood of the broad masses; they did not become a guide to the action of the millions.

Can we assert that we have already finally abandoned this formal approach to adopted decisions? No. It must be said that even at this Congress the speeches of some of the comrades gave indication of remnants of formalism; a desire made itself felt at times to substitute for the concrete analysis of reality and life's experience some sort of new scheme, some sort of new, oversimplified lifeless formula, to represent as *actually existing* what we *desire*, but does not yet exist.

The Struggle Against Fascism Must Be Concretised.

No general characterisation of fascism, however correct in itself, can relieve us of the need to study and take into account the specific development of fascism and the various forms of fascist dictatorship in the individual countries and at its various stages. It is necessary in each country to investigate, study and ascertain the national peculiarities, the specific national features of fascism and map out accordingly effective methods and forms of struggle against fascism.

Lenin persistently warned us against "stereotyped methods and mechanical levelling, against rendering tactical rules, rules of struggle, identical." This warning is particularly to the point when it is a question of fighting an enemy who so subtly and Jesuitically exploits the national sentiments and prejudices of the masses and their anti-capitalist inclinations in the interests of big capital. *Such an enemy must be known to perfection, from every angle.* We must without any delay whatever react to his various manoeuvres, discover his hidden moves, be prepared to repel him in any arena and at any moment. We must not hesitate even to *learn from the enemy if that will help us more quickly and more effectively to wring his neck.* (Applause.)

It would be a gross mistake to lay down a universal rule of development of fascism, to cover all countries and all peoples. Such a rule would not help, but hamper us in carrying on a real struggle. Apart from everything else, such a rule would result in indiscriminately thrusting into the camp of fascism those sections of the population which, if properly approached, could, at a certain stage of development, be brought into the struggle against fascism, or could at least be neutralised.

Let us take, for example, the development of fascism in France and in Germany. Some comrades believe that, generally speaking, fascism cannot develop as easily in France as in Germany. What is true and what is false in this contention? It is true that there were no such deep-seated democratic traditions in Germany as there are in France, which went through several revolutions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is true that France is a country which won the war and forced the Versailles system on other countries, that the national sentiments of the French people have not been hurt as they have been in Germany where this factor played such a great part. It is true that in France the basic masses of the peasantry are pro-Republic and anti-fascist, especially in the South, in contrast with Germany where even before fascism came to power a considerable section of the peasantry was under the influence of reactionary parties.

But, comrades, notwithstanding the existing differences in the development of the fascist movement in France and in Germany, notwithstanding the factors which impede the onslaught of fascism in France, it would be shortsightedness not to notice the uninterrupted growth there of the fascist peril and to underestimate the possibility of a fascist *coup d'état*. Moreover, a number of factors in France favour the development of fascism. One must not forget that the economic crisis, which commenced later in France than in other capitalist countries, continues to deepen and sharpen, and this greatly facilitates the orgy of fascist demagoguery. French fascism holds strong positions in the army, among the officers, such as the National Socialists did not have in the Reichswehr before their advent to power. Furthermore, in no other country, perhaps, has the parliamentary regime been corrupted to such an enormous extent and caused such indignation among the masses as in France. Nor must it be forgotten that the development of fascism is furthered by the French bourgeoisie's keen fear of losing its political and military hegemony in Europe.

Hence it follows that the successes scored by the anti-fascist movement in France, of which Comrades Thorez and Cachin have spoken here, and over which we so heartily rejoice, are still far from indicating that the toiling masses have definitely succeeded in blocking the road to fascism. I must emphatically stress once more the full importance of the tasks of the French working class in the struggle against fascism, of which I already spoke in my report.

It would likewise be dangerous to cherish illusions regarding the weakness of fascism in other countries where it does not enjoy a broad mass base. We have the example of such countries as Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Finland, where fascism, although it had no broad base, came to power, relying on the armed forces of the state, and then sought to broaden its base by making use of the State apparatus.

Comrade Dutt was right in his contention that there was a tendency amongst us to contemplate fascism in general, without taking into account the specific features of the fascist movement in the various countries, erroneously classifying all reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie as fascism and going as far as calling the entire non-Communist camp fascist. The struggle against fascism was not strengthened but rather weakened in consequence.

Even now we still have survivals of a stereotyped approach to the question of fascism. When some comrades assert that Roosevelt's "New Deal" represents an ever clearer and more pronounced form of the development of the bourgeoisie towards fascism than the "National Government" in Great Britain, for example, is this not a manifestation of such a stereotyped approach to the question? One must indeed be a confirmed addict of the use of hackneyed schemes not to see that the most reactionary circles of American finance capital which are attacking Roosevelt represent first and foremost the very force which is stimulating and organising the fascist movement in the United States. Not to see the beginnings of real fascism in the United States behind the hypocritical outpourings of these circles "in defence of the democratic rights of the American citizen" is tantamount to misleading the working class in the struggle against its worst enemy.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries there can be no question of the kind of fascism that we are accustomed to see in Germany, Italy and other capitalist countries. Here we must study and take into account the quite different economic, political

and historical conditions, in accordance with which fascism is assuming, and will continue to assume, peculiar forms of its own.

Unable to approach the phenomena of real life concretely, some comrades, who suffer from mental laziness, substitute general, non-committal *formulas* for a careful and concrete study of the *actual* situation and the relationship of class forces. Unlike *snipers* who shoot with unerring aim, they remind us of those "crack" riflemen who regularly and unfailingly miss the target, shooting either too high or too low, too near or too far. But we, comrades, as Communists, active in the labour movement, as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class, want to be *snipers* who unfailingly hit the target. (*Prolonged applause.*)

The United Proletarian Front and the Anti-Fascist People's Front.

Some comrades are quite needlessly racking their brains over the problem of *what to begin with*—the *united proletarian front* or the *anti-fascist people's front*.

Some say that we cannot start forming the anti-fascist people's front until we have organised a solid united front of the proletariat.

Others argue that, since the establishment of the united proletarian front meets with the resistance of Social-Democracy in a number of countries, it is better to start at once with building up the people's front, and then develop the united working-class front on this basis.

Evidently both groups fail to understand that the united proletarian front and the anti-fascist people's front are inter-connected and interwoven, the one passing into the other in the process of the practical struggle against fascism as a consequence of the *living dialectics of the struggle*, and that there is certainly no Chinese wall to keep them apart.

For it cannot be seriously supposed that it is impossible to establish a genuine anti-fascist people's front without securing the unity of action of the working class itself, the *guiding force* of this anti-fascist people's front. At the same time, the further development of the united proletarian front depends, to a considerable degree, upon its transformation into a people's front against fascism.

Comrades! Just picture to yourselves a devotee of cut-and-dried theories of this kind, gazing upon our resolution and contriving his pet scheme with the zeal of a true pedant:

First, local united proletarian front from below;

Then, regional united front from below;

Thereafter, united front from above, passing through the same stages;

Then, unity in the trade union movement;

After that, the enlistment of other anti-fascist parties;

This to be followed by the extended people's front, from above and from below;

After which the movement must be raised to a higher level, politicalised, revolutionised, and so on and so forth. (*Laughter.*)

You will say, comrades, that this is sheer nonsense. I agree with you. But the unfortunate thing is that in some form or other this kind of sectarian nonsense is still to be found quite frequently in our ranks.

How does the matter really stand? Of course, we must strive everywhere for a broad anti-fascist people's front of struggle against fascism. But in a number of countries we shall not get beyond general talk about the people's front, unless we succeed in mobilising the masses of the workers for the purpose of breaking down the resistance of Social-Democracy to the formation of a proletarian united front of struggle. This is how the matter stands, above all in Great Britain where the working class comprises the majority of the population and where the bulk of the working class follows the lead of the trade unions and the Labour Party. That is how matters stand in Belgium and in the Scandinavian countries where the numerically small Communist Parties must face strong mass trade unions and numerically large Social-Democratic Parties.

In these countries the Communists would commit a very serious political mistake if they shirked the struggle to establish a united proletarian front under cover of general talk about a people's front which cannot be formed without the participation of the mass working-class organisations. In order to bring about a genuine people's front in these countries, the Communists must carry out an enormous amount of political and organisational work among the masses of the workers. They must overcome the preconceived ideas of these masses who regard their mass reformist organisations as already the embodiment of proletarian unity. They must convince these masses that the establishment of a united front with the Communists means a shift on the part of those masses to the position of the class struggle, and that this shift alone will guarantee success in the struggle against the offensive of capital and fascism. We shall not overcome these

difficulties by setting ourselves much wider tasks here. On the contrary, in fighting to remove these difficulties we shall thus actually, and not in words alone, prepare the ground for the creation of a genuine people's front of battle against fascism, against the capitalist offensive and against the threat of imperialist war.

The issue is a different one in countries like Poland, where a strong peasant movement is developing side by side with the labour movement, where the peasant masses have their own organisations which are becoming radicalised as a result of the agrarian crisis, where national oppression evokes indignation among the national minorities. Here the development of the general people's front of struggle will proceed parallel with the development of the united proletarian front, and at times in this type of country the movement for a general people's front may even outstrip the movement for a working-class front.

Take a country like Spain, which is in the process of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Can it be said that, because the proletariat is split up into numerous small organisations, complete fighting unity of the working class must first be established here before a workers' and peasants' front against Lerroux and Gil Robles is created? By tackling the question in this way we would isolate the proletariat from the peasantry, would in effect be withdrawing the slogan of the agrarian revolution, would make it easier for the enemies of the people to disunite the proletariat and the peasantry, and set the peasantry in opposition to the working class. Yet this, comrades, as is well known, was one of the main reasons why the working class was defeated in the October events of 1934.

However, one thing must not be forgotten: in all countries where the proletariat is comparatively small in numbers, where the peasantry and the urban petty-bourgeois strata predominate, it is all the more necessary to bend every effort to set up a firm united front of the working class itself, so that it may be able to take its place as the leading factor with regard to all the toilers.

Thus, comrades, in attacking the problem of the proletarian front and the people's front, there can be no general panacea suitable for all cases, all countries, all peoples. In this matter universalism, the application of one and the same recipe to all countries is equivalent, if you will allow me to say so, to ignorance; and ignorance should be flogged, even when it stalks about, nay, particularly when it stalks about, in the cloak of universal cut-and-dried schemes. (Applause.)

The Role of Social-Democracy and its Attitude Towards the United Front of the Proletariat.

Comrades, in view of the tactical problems confronting us, it is very important to give a correct reply to the question of whether Social-Democracy at the present time is still the principal bulwark of the bourgeoisie, and if so, where?

Some of the comrades who participated in the discussion (Comrades Florin, Dutt) touched upon this question, but in view of its importance a fuller reply must be given to it, for it is a question which workers of all trends, particularly Social-Democratic workers, are asking and cannot help asking.

It must be borne in mind that in a number of countries the position of Social-Democracy in the bourgeois state, and its attitude towards the bourgeoisie, have been undergoing a change.

In the first place, the crisis has thoroughly shaken the position of even the most secure section of the working class, the so-called aristocracy of labour, upon which, as we know, Social-Democracy relies for support. This section, too, is beginning more and more to revise its views as to the expediency of the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

Second, as I pointed out in my report, the bourgeoisie in a number of countries is itself compelled to abandon bourgeois democracy and resort to the terroristic form of its dictatorship, depriving Social-Democracy not only of its previous position in the political system of finance capital, but also, under certain conditions, of its legal status, persecuting and even suppressing it.

Third, under the influence of the lessons learnt from the defeat of the workers in Germany, Austria and Spain, a defeat which was largely the result of the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and, on the other hand, under the influence of the victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union as a result of Bolshevik policy and the application of living, revolutionary Marxism, the Social-Democratic workers are becoming revolutionised, are beginning to turn to the class struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The joint effect of all this has been to make it increasingly difficult, and in some countries actually impossible, for Social-Democracy to preserve its former role of bulwark of the bourgeoisie.

Failure to understand this is particularly harmful in those countries in which the fascist dictatorship has deprived Social-Democracy of its legal status. From this point of view the self-

criticism of those German comrades, who in their speeches mentioned the necessity of ceasing to cling to the letter of obsolete formulas and decisions concerning Social-Democracy, of ceasing to ignore the changes that have taken place in its position, was correct. It is clear that if we ignore these changes, it will lead to a distortion of our policy in favour of establishing the unity of the working class, and will facilitate the sabotage of the united front by the reactionary elements of the Social-Democratic leaders.

The process of revolutionisation in the ranks of the Social-Democratic Parties now going on in all countries is developing unevenly. It must not be imagined that the Social-Democratic workers who are becoming revolutionised will *at once* and on a mass scale adopt the position of consistent class struggle, and will *straightway* unite with the Communists without any intermediate stages. In a number of countries this will be a more or less difficult, a more or less complicated and prolonged process, essentially dependent, at any rate, on the correctness of our policy and tactics. We must even reckon with the possibility that, in passing from the position of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie to the position of class struggle against the bourgeoisie, some Social-Democratic Parties and organisations will continue to exist for a time as independent organisations or parties. In such event there can, of course, be no thought of such Social-Democratic organisations or parties being regarded as a bulwark of the bourgeoisie.

It cannot be expected that those Social-Democratic workers who are under the influence of the ideology of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, which has been instilled in them in the course of decades, will part with this ideology of their own accord, actuated solely by objective causes. No. It is our business, the business of the Communists, to help them free themselves from the hold of reformist ideology. The work of explaining the principles and programme of Communism must be carried on patiently, in a comradely fashion, and must be adapted to the degree of development of the individual Social-Democratic workers. Our criticism of Social-Democracy must become more specific and systematic, and must be based on the experience of the Social-Democratic masses themselves.

It must be borne in mind that primarily by utilising their experience in the joint struggle with the Communists against the class enemy will it be possible and necessary to facilitate and accelerate the revolutionary development of the Social-Democratic workers. There is no more effective means of the

Social-Democratic workers abandoning their vacillation and doubts than participation in the proletarian united front.

We shall do all in our power to make it easier, not only for the Social-Democratic workers, but also for those leading members of Social-Democratic Parties and organisations who sincerely desire to adopt the revolutionary class position, to work and fight with us against the class enemy. At the same time we declare that any Social-Democratic functionary, lower official, or worker who continues to uphold the disruptive tactics of the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders, who come out against the united front and thus directly or indirectly aid the class enemy, will thereby incur at least equal guilt before the working class as those who are historically responsible for having supported the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration, the policy which in a number of European countries doomed the revolution in 1918 and cleared the way for fascism.

The attitude adopted towards the united front is the dividing line between the reactionary sections of Social-Democracy and the sections that are becoming revolutionary. Our assistance to the latter will be the more effective, the more we intensify our fight against the reactionary camp of Social-Democracy participating in a bloc with the bourgeoisie. And within the Left camp the self-determination of the various elements will take place the sooner, the more determinedly the Communists fight for a united front with the Social-Democratic Parties. The experience of the class struggle and the participation of the Social-Democrats in the united front movement will show who in that camp will prove to be "left" merely in words and who is really Left.

The United Front Government.

While the attitude of Social-Democracy towards the practical realisation of the united proletarian front is, generally speaking, the principal indication in every country of whether the previous role in the bourgeois state of the Social-Democratic Party or of its individual parts has changed, and if so, to what extent, the *attitude of the Social-Democrats on the issue of a united front government will be a particularly clear test.*

When a situation arises in which the question of creating a united front government becomes an immediate practical problem, this issue will become decisive, the touchstone for the policy of Social-Democracy in the given country: either jointly with the fascist-bound bourgeoisie against the working class, or jointly with the revolutionary proletariat against fascism and reaction,

not alone in words but in deeds. That is how the question will inevitably be presented at the time the united front government is formed as well as while it is in power.

I think that enough was said in my report about the character of the united front government and the anti-fascist people's front government, as well as the conditions of their formation, to provide general tactical direction. To expect us over and above this to indicate all possible forms and all conditions under which such governments may be formed would mean but to invite futile conjecture.

I would like to utter a note of warning against over-simplification or the application of any hard-and-fast rules in this question. Life is more complex than any scheme. For example, it would be wrong to imagine that the united front government is an indispensable stage on the road to the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. That is just as wrong as the former assertion that there will be no intermediary stages in the fascist countries and that fascist dictatorship is certain to be immediately superseded by proletarian dictatorship.

The whole question boils down to this: will the proletariat itself be prepared at the decisive moment for the direct overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of its own power, and will it be able in that event to secure the support of its allies? Or, will the movement of the united proletarian front and the anti-fascist people's front at the particular stage be in a position only to suppress or overthrow fascism, without directly proceeding to abolish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie? In the latter case it would be an intolerable piece of political shortsightedness, and not serious revolutionary politics, to use this alone as a ground for refusing to create and support a united front or a people's front government.

It is likewise not difficult to understand that the establishment of a united front government in countries where fascism is not yet in power is something different from the creation of such a government in countries where the fascist dictatorship holds sway. In the latter countries a united front government can be created only in the process of overthrowing fascist rule. In countries where the bourgeois-democratic revolution is developing, a people's front government may become the government of the democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry.

As I have already pointed out in my report, the Communists will do all in their power to support a united front government

to the extent that the latter will really fight against the enemies of the people and grant freedom of action to the Communist Party and to the working class. The question of whether Communists will take part in the government will be determined entirely by the actual situation prevailing at the time. Such questions will be settled as they arise. No handy recipes can be prescribed in advance.

Attitude Towards Bourgeois Democracy.

Comrade Lenski pointed out in his speech that "while mobilising the masses to repel the onslaught of fascism against the rights of the toilers, the Polish Party at the same time had its misgivings about formulating positive democratic demands in order not to create democratic illusions among the masses." The Polish Party is, of course, not the only one in which such fear of formulating positive democratic demands exists in one way or another.

Where does that fear come from, comrades? It comes from an incorrect, non-dialectical conception of our attitude towards bourgeois democracy. We, Communists, are unswerving upholders of Soviet democracy, the great prototype of which is the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union where the introduction of equal suffrage, and the direct and secret ballot is proclaimed by resolution of the Seventh Congress of Soviets at the same time that the last vestiges of bourgeois democracy are being wiped out in the capitalist countries. This Soviet democracy presupposes the victory of the proletarian revolution, the conversion of private property in the means of production into public property, the embarking of the overwhelming majority of the people on the road to Socialism. This democracy does not represent a final form; it develops and will continue to develop in proportion as further progress is made in socialist construction, in the creation of classless society and in the overcoming of the survivals of capitalism in economic life and in the minds of the people.

But to-day the millions of toilers living under capitalism are faced with the necessity of taking a definite stand on these forms in which the rule of the bourgeoisie is clad in the various countries. We are not anarchists and it is not at all a matter of indifference to us what kind of political regime exists in any given country: whether a bourgeois dictatorship in the form of bourgeois democracy, even with democratic rights and liberties greatly curtailed, or a bourgeois dictatorship in its open, fascist

form. Being upholders of Soviet democracy, we shall defend every inch of the democratic gains which the working class has wrested in the course of years of stubborn struggle, and shall resolutely fight to extend these gains.

How great were the sacrifices of the British working class before it secured the right to strike, a legal status for its trade unions, the right of assembly and freedom of the press, extension of the franchise, and other rights! How many tens of thousands of workers gave their lives in the revolutionary battles fought in France in the nineteenth century to obtain the elementary rights and the lawful opportunity of organising their forces for the struggle against the exploiters. The proletariat of all countries has shed much of its blood to win bourgeois-democratic liberties, and will naturally fight with all its strength to retain them.

Our attitude towards bourgeois democracy is not the same under all conditions. For instance, at the time of the October Revolution, the Russian Bolsheviks engaged in a life-and-death struggle against all political parties which opposed the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship under the slogan of the defence of bourgeois democracy. The Bolsheviks fought these parties because the banner of bourgeois democracy had at that time become the standard around which all counter-revolutionary forces mobilised to challenge the victory of the proletariat. The situation is quite different in the capitalist countries at present. Now the fascist counter-revolution is attacking bourgeois democracy in an effort to establish a most barbaric regime of exploitation and suppression of the toiling masses. Now the toiling masses in a number of capitalist countries are faced with the necessity of making a *definite* choice, and of making it to-day, not between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois democracy, but between bourgeois democracy and fascism.

Besides, we have now a situation which differs from that which existed, for example, in the epoch of capitalist stabilisation. At that time the fascist danger was not as acute as it is to-day. At that time it was bourgeois dictatorship in the form of bourgeois democracy that the revolutionary workers were facing in a number of countries and it was against bourgeois democracy that they were concentrating their fire. In Germany, they fought against the Weimar Republic, not because it was a republic, but because it was a *bourgeois* republic, which was suppressing the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, especially in 1918-20 and in 1923.

But could the Communists maintain this stand also when the

fascist movement began to raise its head, when, for instance, in 1932, the fascists in Germany were organising and arming hundreds of thousands of storm troopers against the working class? Of course not. It was the mistake of the Communists in a number of countries, particularly in Germany, that they failed to take into account the changes which had taken place, but continued to repeat those slogans, maintain those tactical positions which had been correct a few years before, especially when the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship was an immediate issue, and when the entire German counter-revolution was rallying under the banner of the Weimar Republic, as it did in 1918-20.

And the circumstance that even to-day we must still make reference to fear, in our ranks, of launching positive democratic slogans indicates how little our comrades have mastered the Marxist-Leninist method of approaching such important problems of our tactics. Some say that the struggle for democratic rights may divert the workers from the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. It may not be amiss to recall what Lenin said on this question:

"It would be a fundamental mistake to suppose that the struggle for democracy can divert the proletariat from the Socialist revolution, or obscure, or overshadow it, etc. On the contrary, just as socialism cannot be victorious unless it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many-sided, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy."*

These words should be firmly fixed in the memories of all our comrades, bearing in mind that in history the great revolutions have grown out of small movements for the defence of the elementary rights of the working class. But in order to be able to link up the struggle for democratic rights with the struggle of the working class for socialism, it is necessary first and foremost to discard any cut-and-dried approach to the question of defence of bourgeois democracy. (*Applause.*)

A Correct Line Alone Is Not Enough.

Comrades, it is clear, of course, that for the Communist International and each of its Sections, the fundamental thing is to work out a correct line. But a correct line alone is not enough for concrete leadership in the class struggle.

* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. V., p. 268.

For that, a number of conditions must be fulfilled, above all the following:

First, *organisational guarantees* that adopted decisions will be carried out in practice and that all obstacles in the way will be resolutely overcome. What Comrade Stalin said at the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union about the conditions necessary to carry out the line of the Party, can and should bear, in its entirety, also on the decisions which our Congress adopts.

Comrade Stalin said:

"Some people think that it is sufficient to draw up a correct Party line, proclaim it from the housetops, enunciate it in the form of general theses and resolutions and carry them unanimously in order to make victory come of itself, automatically, so to speak. This, of course, is wrong. Those who think like that are greatly mistaken. Only incorrigible bureaucrats and office rats can think that. As a matter of fact, these successes and victories were obtained, not automatically, but as a result of a fierce struggle to carry out the Party line. Victory never comes by itself—it has to be dragged by the hand. Good resolutions and declarations in favour of the general line of the Party are only a beginning; they merely express the desire to win, but it is not victory. After the correct line has been given, after a correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on the manner in which the work is organised, on the organisation of the struggle for the application of the line of the Party, on the proper selection of workers, on supervising the fulfilment of the decisions of the leading organs. Without this the correct line of the Party and the correct solutions are in danger of being severely damaged. More than that, after the correct political line has been given, the organisational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, *i.e.*, whether it is fulfilled or not." •

It is hardly necessary to add anything to these striking words of Comrade Stalin, which must become a guiding principle in all the work of our Parties.

Another condition is the *ability to convert decisions of the Communist International and its Sections into decisions of the broad masses themselves*. This is all the more necessary now,

• Stalin, "Report on the Work of the Central Committee." See *Socialism Victorious*, pp. 78-9.

when we are faced with the task of organising a united front of the proletariat and drawing the broad masses of the people into an anti-fascist people's front. The political and tactical genius of Lenin and Stalin is evinced most clearly and most vividly in their masterful ability to get the masses to understand the correct line and the slogans of the Party through their own experience. If we follow up the history of Bolshevism, that greatest of treasure houses of the political strategy and tactics of the revolutionary movement, we can see for ourselves that the Bolsheviks never substituted methods of leading the Party for methods of leading the masses.

Comrade Stalin pointed out that one of the peculiarities of the tactics of the Russian Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for the October Revolution consisted in their ability correctly to determine the path and the turns which naturally lead the masses to the slogans of the Party, to the very "threshold of the revolution," helping them to sense, to test and to realise from their own experience the correctness of these slogans. They did not confuse leadership of the Party with leadership of the masses, but clearly saw the difference between leadership of the first kind and leadership of the second kind. In this way they worked out tactics as the science, not only of Party leadership, but also of the leadership of the millions of toilers.

Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that *the broad masses cannot assimilate our decisions unless we learn to speak the language which the masses understand*. We do not always know how to speak simply, concretely, in images which are familiar and intelligible to the masses. We are still loath to dispense with abstract formulas which we have learnt by rote. As a matter of fact, if you scan our leaflets, newspapers, resolutions and theses, you will find that they are often written in a language and style so heavy that they are difficult for even our Party functionaries to understand, let alone the rank-and-file workers.

If we reflect, comrades, that workers, especially in fascist countries, who distribute or only read these leaflets risk their very lives by doing so, we shall realise still more clearly the need of writing for the masses in a language which they understand, so that the sacrifices made may not have been in vain.

The same applies in no less degree to our oral agitation and propaganda. We must admit quite frankly that in this respect the fascists have often proven more dexterous and flexible than many of our comrades.

I recall, for example, a meeting of unemployed in Berlin

before Hitler's accession to power. It was at the time of the trial of those notorious swindlers and speculators, the Sklarek brothers, which dragged on for several months. A National Socialist speaker in addressing the meeting made demagogic use of that trial, to further his own ends. He referred to the swindles, the bribery and other crimes committed by the Sklarek brothers, emphasised that the trial had been dragging for months and figured out how many hundreds of thousands of marks it had already cost the German people. To the accompaniment of loud applause the speaker declared that such bandits as the Sklarek brothers should have been shot without any ado, and the money wasted on the trial should have gone to the unemployed.

A Communist rose and asked for the floor. The chairman at first refused to recognise him, but under the pressure of the audience which wanted to hear from the Communists he had to let him speak. When the Communist got upon the platform everybody awaited with tense expectation what the Communist speaker would have to say. Well, what did he say?

"Comrades," he began in a loud and strong voice, "the Plenum of the Communist International has just closed. It showed the way to the salvation of the working class. The chief task it puts before you, comrades, is 'to win the majority of the working class. . . .' (Laughter.) The Plenum pointed out that the unemployed movement must be 'politicalised.' (Laughter.) The Plenum calls on us to raise it to a higher level." (Laughter.)

He went on in the same strain, evidently under the impression that he was "explaining" authentic decisions of the Plenum.

Could such a speech appeal to the unemployed? Could they find any satisfaction in the fact that first we intended to politicise, then revolutionise, and finally mobilise them in order to raise their movement to a higher level? (Laughter, applause.)

Sitting in a corner of the hall, I observed with chagrin how the unemployed, who had been so eager to hear a Communist in order to find out from him what to do concretely, began to yawn and display unmistakable signs of disappointment. And I was not at all surprised when towards the end the chairman rudely cut our speaker short without any protest from the meeting.

This unfortunately is not the only case of its kind in our agitational work. Nor were such cases confined to Germany. To agitate in such fashion means to agitate against one's own cause. It is high time to put an end once and for all to these, to say the least, childish methods of agitation.

During my report, the chairman, Comrade Kuusinen, received

a characteristic letter from the floor of the Congress addressed to me. Let me read it:

"In your speech at the Congress, please take up the following question, namely, that all resolutions and decisions adopted in the future by the Communist International be written so that not only trained Communists can get the meaning, but that any working man reading the material of the Comintern might without any preliminary training be able to see at once what the Communists want, and of what service Communism is to mankind. Some Party leaders forget this. They must be reminded of it, and very strongly, too. Also that agitation for Communism be conducted in understandable language."

I do not know exactly who is the author of this letter, but I have no doubt that this comrade voiced in his letter the opinion and desire of millions of workers. Many of our comrades think that the more high-sounding words, and the more formulas and theses unintelligible to the masses they use, the better their agitation and propaganda, forgetting that the greatest leaders and theoreticians of the working class of our epoch, *Lenin* and *Stalin*, have always spoken and written in highly popular language, readily understood by the broad masses.

Everyone of us must make this a law, a Bolshevik law, an elementary rule:

When writing or speaking always have in mind the rank-and-file worker who must understand you, must believe in your appeal and be ready to follow you! You must have in mind those for whom you write, to whom you speak. (Applause.)

Cadres*

Comrades, our best resolutions will remain scraps of paper if we lack the people who are to put them into effect. Unfortunately, however, I must state that the problem of *cadres*, one of the most important questions that confront us, received practically no attention at this Congress. The report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International was discussed for seven days. There were many speakers from various countries, but only a few, and they only in passing, discussed this question, so extremely vital for the Communist Parties and the labour movement. In their practical work our Parties have not yet

* Cadres—here referring to active Party workers and functionaries, or officials.—*Transl.*

realised by far that *people, cadres, decide everything*. They are unable to do what Comrade Stalin taught us to do, namely, cultivate cadres "as a gardener cultivates his favourite fruit tree," "to appreciate people, to appreciate cadres, to appreciate every worker who can be of use to our common cause."

An indifferent attitude on the question of cadres is all the more impermissible for the reason that we are constantly losing some of the most valuable of our cadres in the struggle. For we are not a learned society but a militant movement which is constantly on the firing line. Our most energetic, most courageous and most class-conscious elements are in the front ranks. It is precisely these front-line men that the enemy hunts down, murders, throws into jail, puts in concentration camps and subjects to excruciating torture, particularly in fascist countries. This creates the very urgent necessity of constantly replenishing the ranks, cultivating and training new cadres as well as carefully preserving the existing cadres.

The question of cadres is of particular urgency for the additional reason that under our influence the mass united front movement is gaining momentum and bringing forward many thousands of new working-class militants. Moreover, it is not only young revolutionary elements, not only workers just becoming revolutionary, who have never before participated in a political movement, that stream into our ranks. Very often former members and activists of the Social-Democratic Parties also join us. These new cadres require special attention, particularly in the illegal Communist Parties, the more so because these cadres with their poor theoretical training frequently come up against serious political problems in their practical work which they must solve for themselves.

The problem of what shall be the *correct policy with regard to cadres* is a very serious one for our Parties, as well as for the Young Communist Leagues and for all other mass organisations—for the entire revolutionary labour movement.

What does a correct policy with regard to cadres imply?

First, *knowing one's people*. As a rule there is no systematic study of cadres in our Parties. Only recently have the Communist Parties of France and Poland and, in the East, the Communist Party of China, achieved certain successes in this direction. The Communist Party of Germany, before its underground period, had also undertaken a study of its cadres. The experience of these Parties has shown that as soon as they began to study their people, Party workers were discovered who had

remained unnoticed before. On the other hand, the Parties began to be purged of alien elements who were ideologically and politically harmful. It is sufficient to point to the example of Celor and Barbé in France who, when put under the Bolshevik microscope turned out to be agents of the class enemy and were thrown out of the Party. In Poland and in Hungary the verification of cadres made it easier to discover nests of provocateurs, agents of the enemy, who had sedulously concealed their identity.

Second, *proper promotion of cadres*. Promotion should not be something casual but one of the normal functions of the Party. It is bad when promotion is made exclusively on the basis of narrow Party considerations, without regard to whether the Communist promoted has contact with the masses or not. Promotion should take place on the basis of the ability of the various Party workers to discharge particular functions, and of their popularity among the masses. We have examples in our Parties of promotions which have produced excellent results. For instance, we have a Spanish woman-Communist, sitting in the Presidium of this Congress, Comrade Dolores. Two years ago she was still a rank-and-file Party worker. But in the very first clashes with the class enemy she proved to be an excellent agitator and fighter. Subsequently promoted to the leading body of the Party, she has proved herself a most worthy member of that body. (*Applause.*)

I could point to a number of similar cases in several other countries, but in the majority of cases promotions are made in an unorganised and haphazard manner, and therefore are not always fortunate. Sometimes moralisers, phrasemongers and chatter-boxes who actually harm the cause are promoted to leading positions.

Third, *the ability to use people to best advantage*. We must be able to ascertain and utilise the valuable qualities of every single active worker. There are no ideal people; we must take them as they are and correct their weaknesses and shortcomings. We know of glaring examples in our Parties of the wrong utilisation of good, honest Communists who might have been very useful had they been given work that they were better fit to do.

Fourth, *proper distribution of cadres*. First of all, we must see to it that the main links of the movement are in the charge of strong people who have contacts with the masses, have sprung from the very depths of the masses, who have initiative and are staunch. The more important districts should have an appropriate number of such activists. In capitalist countries it is not an easy matter to transfer cadres from one place to another. Such

a task encounters a number of obstacles and difficulties, including lack of funds, family considerations, etc., difficulties which must be taken into account and properly overcome. But usually we neglect to do this altogether.

Fifth, *systematic assistance to cadres*. This assistance should take the form of careful instruction, comradely control, rectification of shortcomings and mistakes and concrete, everyday guidance.

Sixth, *proper care for the preservation of cadres*. We must learn promptly to withdraw Party workers to the rear whenever circumstances so require, and replace them by others. We must demand that the Party leadership, particularly in countries where the Parties are illegal, assume paramount responsibility for the preservation of cadres. (*Applause*.) The proper preservation of cadres also presupposes highly efficient organisation of secrecy in the Party. In certain of our Parties many comrades think that the Parties are sufficiently prepared for underground existence even though they have reorganised themselves only formally, according to ready-made rules. We had to pay very dearly for having started the real work of reorganisation only after the Party had gone underground, under the direct heavy blows of the enemy. Remember the severe losses the Communist Party of Germany suffered during its transition to underground conditions! Its experience should serve as a serious warning to those of our Parties which to-day are still legal but may lose their legal status to-morrow.

Only a correct policy in regard to cadres will enable our Parties to develop and utilise all available forces to the utmost, and obtain from the enormous reservoir of the mass movement ever fresh reinforcements of new and better active workers.

What should be our *main criteria* in selecting cadres?

First, *absolute devotion to the cause of the working class, loyalty to the Party*, tested in face of the enemy—in battle, in prison, in court.

Second, the closest possible *contact with the masses*. The comrades concerned must be wholly absorbed in the interests of the masses, feel the life pulse of the masses, know their sentiments and requirements. The prestige of the leaders of our Party organisation should be based, first of all, on the fact that the masses regard them as their leaders, and are convinced through their own experience of their ability as leaders, and of their determination and self-sacrifice in struggle.

Third, *ability independently to find one's bearings* and not

to be afraid of assuming responsibility in taking decisions. He who fears to take responsibility is not a leader. He who is unable to display literature, who says: "I will do only what I am told," is not a Bolshevik. Only he is a real Bolshevik leader who does not lose his head at moments of defeat, who does not get a swelled head at moments of success, who displays indomitable firmness in carrying out decisions. Cadres develop and grow best when they are placed in the position of having to solve concrete problems of the struggle independently, and are aware that they are fully responsible for their decisions.

Fourth, *discipline and Bolshevik hardening* in the struggle against the class enemy as well as in their irreconcilable opposition to all deviations from the Bolshevik line.

We must place all the more emphasis on these conditions which determine the correct selection of cadres, because in practice preference is very often given to a comrade who, for example, may be able to write well and be a good speaker but is not a man or woman of action, is not as suited for the struggle as some other comrade who perhaps may not be able to write or speak so well, but is a staunch comrade, possessing initiative and contacts with the masses, and is capable of going into battle and leading others into battle. (*Applause*.) Have there not been ever so many cases of sectarians, doctrinaires or moralisers crowding out loyal mass workers, genuine working-class leaders?

Our leading cadres should combine the knowledge of *what* they must do—with *Bolshevik stamina, revolutionary strength of character and the will power to carry it through*.

In connection with the question of cadres permit me, comrades, to dwell also on the great role which the *International Labour Defence** is called upon to play in relation to the cadres of the labour movement. The material and moral assistance which the I.L.D. organisations render to our prisoners and their families, to political emigrants, to persecuted revolutionaries and anti-fascists, has saved the lives and preserved the strength and fighting capacity of thousands upon thousands of most valuable fighters of the working class in many countries. Those of us who have been in jail have found out directly through our own experience the enormous significance of the activity of the I.L.D. (*Applause*.)

By its activity, the I.L.D. has won the affection, attachment and profound gratitude of hundreds of thousands of proletarians, and of revolutionary elements among the peasantry and profes-

* In Russian—MOPR.—Transl.

sional people. It must become, so to speak, a sort of "Red Cross" of the united front of the proletariat and the anti-fascist people's front, embracing millions of toiling people—the "Red Cross" of the army of the toiling classes embattled against fascism, fighting for peace and socialism. If the I.L.D. is to perform its part successfully, it must train thousands of its own active militants, a multitude of I.L.D. workers of its own, answering in their character and capacity the special purposes of this extremely important organisation.

Under present conditions when bourgeois reaction is growing, when fascism is raging and the class struggle is becoming more acute, the role of the I.L.D. is increasing immensely. The task now before the I.L.D. is to become a genuine mass organisation of the toilers in all capitalist countries (particularly in fascist countries where it must adapt itself to the special conditions prevailing there).

And here I must say as categorically and as sharply as I possibly can that while a *bureaucratic* approach and a soulless attitude toward people is despicable in the labour movement taken in general, in the sphere of activity of the I.L.D. such an attitude is an evil bordering on the criminal. (*Applause.*) The fighters of the working class, the victims of reaction and fascism who are suffering agony in torture chambers and concentration camps, political emigrants and their families should all meet with the most sympathetic care and solicitude on the part of the organisations and functionaries of the I.L.D. (*Prolonged applause.*) The I.L.D. must still better appreciate and discharge its duty of assisting the fighters in the proletarian and anti-fascist movement, particularly in physically and morally preserving the cadres of the labour movement. The Communists and revolutionary workers who are active in the I.L.D. organisations must realise at every step the enormous responsibility they bear before the working class and the Communist International for the successful fulfilment of the role and tasks of the I.L.D. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, as you know, cadres receive their best training in the process of struggle, in surmounting difficulties and withstanding tests, in studying *favourable* and *unfavourable* examples of conduct. We have hundreds of examples of splendid conduct in times of strikes, during demonstrations, in jail, in court. We have thousands of instances of heroism, but unfortunately also not a few cases of pigeon-heartedness, lack of firmness, and even desertion. We often forget these examples, both good and bad. We do not teach people to benefit by these examples. We do not

show them what should be emulated and what rejected. We must study the conduct of our comrades and active workers during class conflicts, at police court hearings, in the jails and concentration camps, in court, etc. The good sides should be brought to light and held up as models to be followed, while all that which is rotten, non-Bolshevik and philistine is to be cast aside. Since the Leipzig trial we have had quite a number of comrades appearing before bourgeois and fascist courts who have shown that numerous cadres are growing up with an excellent understanding of what really constitutes Bolshevik conduct in court.

But how many even of you delegates to the Congress know the details of the trial of the railwaymen in Rumania, know about the trial of Fiete Schulz who was subsequently beheaded by the fascists in Germany, the trial of our valiant Japanese comrade, Itikawa, the trial of the Bulgarian revolutionary soldiers, and many other trials at which admirable examples of proletarian heroism were displayed? (*Storm of applause, all rise.*) Such worthy examples of proletarian heroism must be popularised, must be contrasted with the manifestations of faintheartedness, philistinism, and every kind of rot and frailty in our ranks and the ranks of the working class. These examples must be used most extensively in educating the cadres of the labour movement.

Comrades! Our Party leaders often complain that *there are no people*; that they are short of people for agitational and propaganda work, for the newspapers, the trade unions, for work among the youth, among women. Not enough, not enough—that is the cry. We simply haven't got the people. To this we could reply in the old, yet eternally new, words of Lenin:

"*There are no people—yet there are enormous numbers of people.* There are enormous numbers of people, because the working class and the most diverse strata of society, year after year, advance from their ranks an increasing number of discontented people who desire to protest, who are ready to render all the assistance they can in the fight against absolutism, the intolerableness of which is not yet recognised by all, but is nevertheless more and more acutely sensed by increasing masses of the people. At the same time we have no people, because we have no leaders, no political leaders, we have no talented organisers capable of organising extensive and at the same time uniform and harmonious work that would give employment to all forces, even the most inconsiderable."^{*}

^{*}Lenin, "What Is to be Done?" *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 142.

These words of Lenin must be thoroughly grasped by our Parties and applied by them as a guide in their everyday work. There are plenty of people. They need only be discovered in our own organisations, during strikes and demonstrations, in various mass organisations of the workers, in united front bodies. They must be helped to grow in the course of their work and struggle; they must be put in such conditions where they can really be useful to the workers' cause.

Comrades, we Communists are people of action. Ours is the problem of practical struggle against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the threat of imperialist war, the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. It is precisely this *practical* task that imposes upon the Communist cadres the obligation to equip themselves with *revolutionary theory*. For us Stalin, that greatest master of revolutionary action, has taught us; theory gives those engaged in practical work the power of orientation, clarity of vision, assurance in work, belief in the triumph of our cause.

But real revolutionary theory is irreconcilably hostile to any emasculated theorising, any futile toying with abstract definitions. *Our theory is not a dogma, but a guide to action*, Lenin used to say. It is *such* a theory that our cadres need, and they need it as badly as they need their daily bread, as they need air, water. Whoever really wishes to rid our work of deadening, stereotyped schemes, of pernicious scholasticism, must sear them out with a red-hot iron, both by real, *practical*, active struggle waged together with and at the head of the masses, and by untiring effort to grasp the mighty, fertile, all-powerful Bolshevik theory, the teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin. (*Applause.*)

In this connection I consider it particularly necessary to draw your attention to the work of our *Party schools*. It is not pedants, moralisers or adepts at quoting that our schools must train. No! It is practical front-rank fighters in the cause of the working class that must leave their walls—people who are front-rank fighters not only because of their boldness and readiness for self-sacrifice, but also because they see further than rank-and-file workers and know better than they the path that leads to the emancipation of the toilers. All sections of the Communist International must without any dilly-dallying seriously take up the question of the proper organisation of Party schools, in order to turn them into *smithies*, where these fighting cadres are to be forged.

The principal task of our Party schools, it seems to me, is to teach the Party and Young Communist League members there

how to apply the Marxist-Leninist method to the concrete situation in particular countries, to definite conditions, not to the struggle against an enemy "in general" but against a particular, definite enemy. For this purpose it is necessary to study not merely the letter of Leninism, but its living revolutionary spirit.

There are two ways of training cadres in our Party schools:

First method: teaching people abstract theory, trying to give them the greatest possible dose of dry learning, coaching them how to write theses and resolutions in literary style, and only incidentally touching upon the problems of the particular country of the particular labour movement, its history and traditions, and the experience of the Communist Party in question. Only incidentally!

Second method: such theoretical training in the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism as is based on a practical study by the student of the cardinal problems concerning the struggle of the proletariat in his own country. On returning to his practical work, the student will then be able to find his bearings independently, and *become an independent practical organiser and leader capable of leading the masses to battle against the class enemy*.

Not all graduates of our Party schools prove to be suitable timber. Many have phrases, abstractions, book knowledge and show of learning. But we need real, truly Bolshevik organisers and leaders of the masses. And we need them badly this very day. It does not matter if such students be unable to write good theses (though we need that very much, too) as long as they know how to organise and lead, undaunted by difficulties, capable of surmounting them.

Revolutionary theory is the generalised, *summarised experience* of the revolutionary movement. Communists must carefully utilise in their countries not only the experience of the past but also the experience of the present struggle of other detachments of the international labour movement. However, correct utilisation of experience does not by any means denote *mechanical transposition* of ready-made forms and methods of struggle from one set of conditions to another set, from one country to another, as so often happens in our Parties. Bare imitation, simple copying of methods and forms of work, even of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in countries where capitalism is still supreme, may with the best of intentions result in harm rather than good, as has so often actually been the case. It is precisely from the experience of the Russian Bolsheviks that we must learn to apply

effectually, to the specific conditions of life in each country, the single international line; in the struggle against capitalism we must learn pitilessly to cast aside, pillory and hold up to general ridicule all phrase-mongering, use of hackneyed formulas, pedantry and doctrinairism.

It is necessary to learn, comrades, to learn always, at every step, in the course of the struggle, at liberty and in jail. To learn and to fight, to fight and to learn. We must be able to combine the great teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin with Stalin's firmness at work and in struggle, with Stalin's irreconcilability, on matters of principle, toward the class enemy and deviators from the Bolshevik line, with Stalin's fearlessness in face of difficulties, with Stalin's revolutionary realism. (Applause.)

Comrades! Never has any international congress of Communists aroused such keen interest on the part of world public opinion as we witness now in regard to our present Congress. We may say without fear of exaggeration that there is not a single serious newspaper, not a single political party, not a single more or less serious political or public personage that is not following the course of our Congress with the closest attention.

The eyes of millions of workers, peasants, small townspeople, office workers and intellectuals, of colonial peoples and oppressed nationalities are turned towards Moscow, the great capital of the first but not last state of the international proletariat. (Applause.)

In this we see a confirmation of the enormous importance and urgency of the questions discussed at the Congress and of its decisions. The frenzied howls of the fascists of all countries, particularly of German fascism fuming at the mouth, only confirm us in our belief that our decisions have indeed hit the mark. (Applause.)

In the dark night of bourgeois reaction and fascism, in which the class enemy is endeavouring to keep the toiling masses of the capitalist countries, the Communist International, the international Party of the Bolsheviks, stands out like a beacon, showing all mankind the one right way to emancipation from the yoke of capitalism, from fascist barbarity and the horrors of imperialist war.

The establishment of unity of action of the working class is a decisive stage on that road. Yes, unity of action by the organisations of the working class of every trend, the consolidation of its forces in all spheres of its activity and at all sectors of the class struggle.

The working class must achieve the unity of its trade unions.

In vain do some reformist trade union leaders attempt to frighten the workers with the spectre of a trade union democracy destroyed by the interference of the Communist Parties in the affairs of the united trade unions, by the existence of Communist fractions within the trade unions.

To depict us Communists as opponents of trade union democracy is sheer nonsense. We advocate and consistently uphold the right of the trade unions to decide their problems for themselves. We are even prepared to forego the idea of creating Communist fractions in the trade unions if that is necessary to promote trade union unity. We are prepared to come to terms as to the independence of the united trade unions of all political parties. But we are decidedly opposed to any dependence of the trade unions on the bourgeoisie, and do not give up our basic point of view that it is impermissible for trade unions to adopt a neutral position in regard to the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The working class must strive to secure the amalgamation of all forces of the working-class youth and of all organisations of the anti-fascist youth, and win over that section of the toiling youth which has come under the demoralising influence of fascism and other enemies of the people.

The working class must and will achieve unity of action in all spheres of the labour movement. This will come about the sooner the more firmly and resolutely we Communists and revolutionary workers of all capitalist countries apply in practice the new tactical line adopted by our Congress in relation to the most important urgent questions of the international labour movement.

We know that there are many difficulties ahead. Our path is not a smooth, asphalt road; our path is not strewn with roses. The working class will have to overcome many an obstacle, obstacles in its own midst, as well; it still faces the task above all of rendering completely harmless the disruptive role of the reactionary elements of Social-Democracy. Many are the sacrifices that will be exacted under the hammer blows of bourgeois reaction and fascism. The revolutionary ship of the proletariat will have to navigate among a multitude of submerged rocks before reaching safe port.

But the working class in the capitalist countries is to-day no longer what it was in 1914, at the beginning of the imperialist war, nor what it was in 1918, at the end of the war. The working class has behind it twenty years of rich experience and revolu-

tionary trials, bitter lessons of a number of defeats, especially in Germany, Austria and Spain.

The working class has before it the inspiring example of the Soviet Union, the country of socialism victorious, an example of how the class enemy can be defeated, of how the working class can establish its own government and build socialist society.

The bourgeoisie no longer holds *undivided* dominion over the whole expanse of the world. Now *the victorious working class* rules over one-sixth of the globe, and Soviets control a vast stretch of territory in the great land of China.

The working class possesses a firm, well-knit revolutionary vanguard, the Communist International. It has a tried and recognised, a great and wise leader—*Stalin*. (*Storm of applause, all rise. Cheers and shouts of greeting from all delegations.*)

The entire course of historical development, comrades, favours the cause of the working class. In vain are the efforts of the reactionaries, the fascists of every hue, the entire world bourgeoisie, to turn back the wheel of history. No, that wheel is turning forward and will continue to turn forward until a world-wide Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall have been established, until the final victory of Socialism throughout the whole world. (*Loud, prolonged applause.*)

There is but one thing that the working class of the capitalist countries still lacks—unity in its own ranks.

So let the clarion call of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the battle cry of the Communist International, ring out all the more loudly from this platform to the whole world:

Workers of the World, Unite!

(*Loud prolonged applause. The vast hall resounds to shouts of "Hurrah!" "Rot Front!" "Banzai!" All rise and sing the "Internationale." The German delegation offers a triple "Rot Front!" Shouts of "Long live Comrade Stalin!" "Long live Comrade Dimitrov!" are heard in many languages. The delegations of the various countries in turn sing their songs of struggle. When the singing and cheering subside for a moment, Comrade Manuisky exclaims:*

"Long live the faithful and tested companion-at-arms of the great Stalin; long live the helmsman of the Communist International, Comrade Dimitrov!"

Renewed enthusiastic applause and cheering, culminating in an ovation lasting fifteen to twenty minutes.)